l: Krasheninnikov N-5 (1736-40) 1764 Kamchadal

136 *March*, when it is washed away again by the high water arising
226 from the melting of the snow; which happens regularly every year. The herrings come every day to the mouth of the outlet, as if to inform themselves whether the passage was yet open, and remain there from morning 'till evening, when they return to the deeper part of the lake. The *Kamtschadales* observing this, break holes in the ice near the mouth of the outlet, where they put down their nets, and catch great quantities. This fishery continues so long as the ice remains upon the lake. They catch them likewise with nets in the summer, at the mouths of the rivers;
262 when they boil out the fat, which is as white as butter, and more
438 delicate than that of any other fish; and send it from the lower *Kamtschatkoy* fort (where the greatest quantity is made) as a rare present, to the other forts.

CHAP. X.

Of the BIRDS.

136 *KAMTSCHATKA* abounds in birds, but the in-
223 habitants make less use of them than of roots and fishes:
433 the reason of this is, that they don't well know how to catch them; and their fishery is so advantageous to them, that to leave that and go a bird-catching would be as ridiculous as for the husbandman to leave his plough and go a shooting.

136 I shall here divide the birds into three classes: the first, sea fowls; the second, the fresh-water fowls; and the third, those which frequent the woods and fields.

CLASS

1: Krasheninnikov N-5 (1736-40) 1764 Kamchadal

these vices occasion frequent quarrels and wars among them
ſometimes with their neighbours, not from a deſire of increaſing 578
their power, but from ſome other cauſes; ſuch as the carrying 579
off their proviſions, or rather their girls, which is frequently
practiſed as the moſt ſummary method of procuring a wife.

Their trade is likewiſe not ſo much calculated for the acquiſition 439
of riches as for procuring the neceſſaries and conveniencies of life.
They ſell the *Koreki* ſables, fox and white dog ſkins, dried
muſhroons, or ſuch trifles; and receive in exchange cloaths made
of deer-ſkins and other hides: among themſelves they exchange 438
what they abound with for what they want, as dogs, boats, diſhes,
troughs, nets, hemp, yarn, and proviſions. This kind of barter 437
is carried on under a great ſhew of friendſhip; for when one 576
wants any thing that another has, he goes freely to viſit him, and
without any ceremony makes known his wants, although perhaps he
never had any acquaintance with that perſon before: the landlord
is obliged to behave according to the cuſtom of the country;
and bringing whatever his gueſt has occaſion for, gives it him.
He afterwards returns the viſit, and muſt be received in the ſame
manner; ſo that both parties have their wants ſupplied.

Their manners are quite rude: they never uſe any civil ex- 576
preſſion or ſalutation; never take off their caps, nor bow to one 157
another; and their diſcourſe is ſtupid, and betrays the moſt con-
ſummate ignorance; and yet they are in ſome degree curious, and
inquiſitive upon many occaſions.

They have filled almoſt every place in heaven and earth with 771
different ſpirits, which they both worſhip and fear more than
God: they offer them ſacrifices upon every occaſion, and ſome
carry little idols about them, or have them placed in their
dwellings; but, with regard to God, they not only neglect to
worſhip him; but, in caſe of troubles and misfortunes, they
curſe and blaſpheme him.

They keep no account of their age, though they can count as 802
far as one hundred; but this is ſo troubleſome to them that

7:Lesseps T-3 (1787-88)1790 Kamchadal

000 ſoon puniſhed. After having travelled a conſiderable number of werſts upon the Kamtſchatka, which I had been delighted to find again, and the width of which in this place particularly ſtruck me, I was obliged to quit it and enter a ſort of ſtrait, where the ſnow, driven by the hurricanes, preſented an uneven and deceitful ſurface. It was impoſſible to ſee or avoid the rocks that ſurrounded me. I preſently heard a crack that told me my ſledge was damaged; it was in reality one of my ſkates broken in two. My guides aſſiſted me in adjuſting it in the beſt manner we could, and we had the good fortune to reach Ouchkoff without any other accident. It was midnight, and we travelled this day ſixty-ſix werſts. My firſt care was to refit my ſledge, which detained me till the next day.

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There are in this village one iſba, and eleven balagans; the number of inhabitants is

7: Lesseps T-3 (1787-88) 1790 Kamchadal

is reduced to five families, who are divided into three yourts. In the neighbourhood is a lake which abounds ſo much with fiſh, that all the villages round reſort to it for their winter ſtock. It is alſo a conſiderable reſource for the capital, which would otherwiſe be almoſt deſtitute of a proviſion of the firſt neceſſity throughout the peninſula.

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I left Ouchkoff early in the morning, and at noon had travelled forty-four werſts, partly upon the Kamtſchatka, and partly acroſs extenſive heaths. The firſt village I came to was Kreſtoff. It was a little larger than the preceding oſtrog, but ſimilar in other reſpects to what I had before ſeen. I only ſtayed to change my dogs. Hitherto I had purſued the road which M. Kaſloff was to take to get to Yelofki; but inſtead of proceeding like him to Khartchina, I directed my courſe, upon coming out of

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22: Guillemard T-2 (1882) 1886 Kamchadal

load. The last string was in charge of our new man, who, overcome by the "damnable iteration" of a birch-forest, fell asleep and tumbled off his horse. In his fall, unfortunately, he dislodged some of the loose packs, which, swinging under the horse's belly, started it off at full speed. Dashing wildly forward, the frightened animals caught the others in rear, upsetting Vodki and communicating the stampede to the whole line. We were at the time in thick forest, and plunging into this, our cavalcade rapidly disappeared in all directions, various ominous crackings alone revealing their line of progress. When separate individuals of a string try to pass on different sides of the same tree a startling effect is very often produced, but the old and experienced packhorse knows that better results may be obtained by the navigation of a three-foot passage between two birches. We found Ivan supporting his head in both hands, and proceeded to administer a lecture and surgical relief. Vodki, by the really masterly and exhaustive manner in which he was exhibiting the expletive richness of the Russian language, was evidently not in a condition to require attention. There is always, happily, a comical side to these affairs, which makes the traveller regard "the most disastrous chances" to his baggage with tolerable equanimity.

We pitched camp about twelve or fifteen miles from Narchiki, a little village that in bygone days was one of the palisaded *ostrogs* of the Russians; and though close to a pretty and most likely-looking stream, we were unable to catch any fish for supper, for the first and only time during our ride to the river.

In most bush countries it is the hunter's rule to see that the fire is extinguished, or at least rendered harmless, before breaking camp. In Kamschatka the greatest care is taken about this, as bush-fires invariably cause the sables to desert the neighbourhood for many miles around. As my readers are perhaps aware, the fur of this animal is the most valuable export of the country, and a very large proportion of the inhabitants are employed for the greater part of the year in sable-hunting only. The price obtained by the hunter

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22: Guillemard T-2 (1882) 1886 Kamchadal

224 438 443 452 563 for the skins varies very much if these be sold separately. But generally the season's catch is disposed of *en masse*, and a fixed price paid per head, whether good, bad, or indifferent. By far the greater part of the trade lies in the hands of the individual I have alluded to under his title of the King of Kamschatka. That he was by no means beloved of his subjects was abundantly evident, but his power was so great that but few were able, even if they dared, to shake off the hold he had upon them. As the owner of what was, practically, the only store in Petropaulovsky, the natives became easily indebted to him, their account for goods supplied being invariably in excess of the amount allowed for the furs brought for disposal. They are thus, we were informed, obliged to bring the catch of the following season to the same market, where, owing to the absence of competition, the prices are by no means high. If the corresponding profit upon the flour, cloth, and other goods sold be taken into consideration, it will be seen that, with a little capital and an elastic conscience, a fur-trader in Kamschatka ought not to do badly.

435 563 In St. Petersburg the price of a single sable-skin ranges from £2 to £25. In Kamschatka the wretched peasant, living upon half-rotten fish and exposed to the rigours of a climate which, in its severity, surpasses that of almost every inhabited region of the world, receives, nominally, an average of sixteen roubles[1] per skin. In reality, as I have stated, he has to take out this value in 273 goods. He is wise if he does so, and can keep clear of the brandy, 435 which, in spite of the law which forbids its sale anywhere but R 177 in Petropaulovsky, has proved the ruin of so many of his country-.27 men.

The price of other skins is generally settled individually. A fairly good bear's skin fetches about three or four roubles. It is only the very finest and largest that will bring as much as seven roubles. A river otter, if in good condition, is valued at the latter

[1] The Russian paper rouble is worth nearly half-a-crown; the silver rouble about three shillings and sixpence.

[see page 74--analyst]

22: Guillemard T-2 (1882) 1886 Kamchadal

Of the number of sables killed annually in Kamchata it is
224 difficult to form an estimate. The greater portion no doubt are
438 exported *vid* Petropaulovsky, this port draining the large extent
434 of country in the region of the Kamschatka River, but a good
563 many must find their way to Bolcheresk, and some others to Tigil, a settlement in the northern part of the peninsula which has only a difficult communication with the villages on the lower part of the Kamschatka. In Petropaulovsky almost all the skins pass through the hands of the "King of Kamschatka," and the number exported by him for the season of 1882 was over two thousand. The profit on each skin probably averaged at least forty shillings, and it must be allowed that, however gloomy the outlook in Hudson's Bay and elsewhere may be, there is at least one part of the world where the fur-trade is not "played out."

We left camp again on the morning of August 30th, and after two hours' travelling came to the little village of Puschina, if village indeed it can be called. It now appeared that Vodki's plan had been to get us on to this place if possible, partly because he preferred a hut to tent life in wet weather, and partly, according to
161 Afanasi, because he was afraid of the bears. Puschina consists of
177 three huts only, with the usual proportion of fish-drying sheds,
361 and boasts of a population of fifteen souls. In 1787, according to Lesseps, it was larger than Gunal. The inhabitants appeared dirty and miserable creatures, and were more of the true Kamschatdale type than any others we had yet come across. One or two of the huts or storehouses were raised above the ground on pillars, and much resembled a Norwegian *stabur* in appearance, except that there was a complete absence of carving. It is rare to see any settlement in Kamschatka which is not placed actually on the banks of a river, but Puschina, standing two or three hundred yards away, is one of the exceptions, probably owing to the fact that the banks of the stream are here very low, and the rise of the river during the period of the melting of the snows is often very considerable.

We rested our horses and obtained a draught of fresh milk

[see page 74--Analyst]

29:Cochrane T-2(1821-22)1824 Kamchadal

136 sheep, and sometimes a few lynxes, are also to be
438 found. The number of skins annually exported
439 and consumed in the peninsula is about thirty thousand, of which sables and foxes form the principal part. The sables are considered at once the warmest and the coarsest known; the foxes however, especially the fiery red, are of the finest spe-
231 cies. Next to these furs, the dogs of Kamtchatka may be considered as forming a great part of their riches. These faithful and useful animals, are employed to transport fish, supply the house with water, the cattle with hay,—in short to do all the work that horses perform in England. They are fed as circumstances may dictate, being always left to shift for themselves from June to October. They are of a coarse appearance, in shape resembling a common house-dog, but endued with great sagacity, and it is to be regretted that they are not relieved a little by the importation of horses.

136 Independent of fish and wild animals, the Kamtchatdales derive also a considerable benefit from the surprising quantities of geese, ducks, swans,
251 snipes, and wild cocks. They are preserved by
262 dipping them in water, which freezing, they will be good as long as winter continues; at other times they are salted. The ducks and snipes are most excellent; but the geese, swans, and wild sheep are considered venison, and of the most delicious kind too, by those who are termed epicures; for myself although I have frequently partaken of them,